

A Time Question

As time flows by us new relationships with objects, human and non-human, are brought to us while old relationships vanish. These various relationships have for us, in general, various values, some new relationships are valuable and others are liabilities and the same thing is true of the relationships that are passing. Now it may be that the total sum of the positive values and liabilities is, typically for an individual, of greater positive value in the case of the one or the other of these groups of relationships. If the positive value of the passing relationships is greater than that of the incoming relationships then the effect of time is tragic while, in the reverse case, the flow of time brings enrichment. Clearly this difference has much to do with determining one's attitude toward life conditioned by the time-stream. If the passing relationships have, on the whole, the greater positive value then the attitude will tend to be pessimistic while in the reverse case it will tend to be optimistic. It is also possible that the effect with respect to different functions, such as thinking and feeling, is quite different. The movement toward the future may bring enrichment for one function while it brings poverty for the other. The problem is to find if there are individual patterns in this respect.

So far as feeling is concerned it would seem that Buddha found the effect of time to be tragic, and apparently, it was primarily a problem of feeling that initiated the search of Buddha. Has Buddha formulated

a typical problem as felt by all men? Or, has he formulated a problem that applies to only certain types? That is a question we are seeking to investigate.

We present the problem in the form of two questions:

1. Do you find that the positive value in the feeling or affective sense is greater concerning the incoming relationships or the passing relationships?

yes

2. Does the stream from the future bring intellectual enrichment that more than off-sets the intellectual wealth that disappears into the past?

yes